

ΔΟΣ ΜΟΙ ΠΑ ΣΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΤΑΝ ΓΑΝ ΚΙΝΗΣΩ

"Give me where to stand, and I will move the earth"

Archimedes' maxim and Olympism

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In an article published in the Greek newspaper "To Bima" on 12th October 1980, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, the new President of the International Olympic Committee, wrote : *"We are stronger now than we were before all the problems arose. Some people thought that the Moscow Olympic Games would never be held. We made sure that they were. I am certain that, as a result, the IOC will be even more respected. And now the IOC is asking itself where its next problems will come from."*

At a time when problems were piling up for the Olympic movement, Lord Killanin said: *"Never a dull moment"*. Today, as new problems loom on the Olympic horizon, a new task becomes necessary, the pursuit of which should, I am sure, be included in the new programme of the IOC and constitute one of the principal aims of its new President. This new task is that of the Olympic education of mothers.

I have been lucky enough to have attended the three Olympiads which were particularly marked by acts contrary to the Olympic spirit :

- in 1936, at the Olympic Games in Berlin, which were the adjunct of Nazism ;
- in 1968, at the Olympic Games in Mexico City, where one Olympic champion raised his black-gloved fist as a sign of his solidarity with the Black Panther terrorists ;
- in 1972, in Munich, where the unbelievable actually happened ; instead of the traditional truce, instituted by the Ancient Greeks, it was terrorism which reigned, in its most hideous form ; bloodthirsty terrorism and the Olympic Games were implicated, at the same time and in the same Olympic stadium.

Lord Killanin was quite right when he said "Never a dull moment". And the new President, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, is quite right when he says : "Now the IOC will be more respected". Yet, even so, there is every indication that a new episode of anti-Olympic feeling will taint the atmosphere of each new Olympiad. And we ask ourselves : in order to avoid these anti-Olympic episodes, would it not be a good idea for the IOC to enrich itself with some new aims? Would it not be not only a good idea, but also vital that one of these new aims be the creation of a large international public well-informed about the Olympic Idea? A public fully aware of the real value of this idea and in a position to react effectively to the anti-Olympic decisions of the governments of various countries throughout the world ? On this point, I feel that an old Greek maxim would be a perfect illustration of this idea: "Give me where to stand, and I will move the earth". It is the maxim of Archimedes, the ancient mathematician and physicist, on the theory of the lever. In our case, the lever which will move the Olympic idea will be the mother, the mothers of the whole world, the international mother. The mother who nourishes her young on the Olympic idea and raises them according to its principles will create a humanity which is animated by humanism.

This then is a new aim for the IOC: to persuade Olympic champions, Nobel prize winners, intellectuals of international standing, television and radio stations to take upon themselves the propagation of the Olympic idea among mothers and women in general, and even more importantly, the propagation of the Olympic idea in all the sectors of modern society. To explain to a large public what this great Olympic idea is, these Olympic ideas which are only talked about once every four years, just before the Games. It is

* See "Olympic Review" No. 129, page 457.



possible that some people, even among those in charge of the various National Olympic Committees, do not have a full and complete idea of it. For its philosophy is so deep that there are only a few people who could describe it in such a way as to impart it properly to the masses and for it to become part of their awareness.

Junior and secondary school teachers could set frequent essays on topics and problems relating to the Olympic Games so that children and young people become accustomed to thinking about Olympic ideas and ideals. In this way the Olympic culture would be passed on to the rising generation from three sources: their mothers, the media, and schools.

If the International Olympic Committee were to adopt immediately the idea of an intensive and continuous education of mothers to the ideals of higher athletics, future Olympiads could present athletes of high quality, not only in a sports sense but also in human terms, and above all they could present trainers with a human conscience. And the prizes awarded to the winners would cease to be the products of an Olympic medal industry. And both mothers and their children would

know what they should be looking for in athletics: the Olympic idea and the Olympic ideals.

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